U.S. Department of Justice



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2007 www.usdoi.gov/usao/iln PRESS CONTACTS: AUSA Joan Laser (312) 353-1857 Press Office (312) 353-5318

<u>UNITED STATES REACHES FAIR HOUSING ACT</u> SETTLEMENT WITH OWNERS OF ARLINGTON PARK RACECOURSE

Chicago-The United States and the owners of the Arlington Park Racecourse in Arlington Heights, Illinois, agreed today to resolve the lawsuit filed by the United States in September 2005 to enforce provisions of the Fair Housing Act that prohibit discrimination against families with children. Today's settlement, which still must be approved by the federal court, resolves the government's claims against Arlington Park, LLC and Churchill Downs, Inc., as well as those filed by the HOPE Fair Housing Center, a fair housing advocacy organization located in Wheaton, Illinois. The suit was brought to enforce provisions of the federal Fair Housing Act that prohibit discrimination on the basis of familial status.

"The Fair Housing Act promises equal treatment for families with children," said Gary Shapiro, First Assistant United States Attorney, "and we are committed to the vigorous enforcement of this important law."

Defendants, who operate the thoroughbred horse-racing facility, provide on-site housing for individuals who take care of the racehorses. In 2004, HOPE Fair Housing Center filed a complaint with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) alleging that Defendants' policy of

restricting families from living in six residential buildings on the track's backstretch violated the Fair Housing Act. At the time HOPE filed its complaint, the six buildings from which families were excluded were the only residential housing on the backstretch that had private bathrooms and air conditioning. HUD conducted an investigation and administratively charged Defendants with discriminating on the basis of familial status. The United States filed suit on September 30, 2005. HOPE later intervened in that suit.

Under the terms of the settlement, the Defendants will construct 48 new units of housing with private bathrooms and air conditioning by the beginning of the 2007 racing season that will be made available to backstretch workers with families. Defendants will also install air conditioning in 127 units of housing that will continue to be available for backstretch workers with families. Since the HUD complaint was filed in 2004, Defendants have also constructed 96 new units of housing with air conditioning and private bathrooms that are available to backstretch workers with families. The settlement also requires the Defendants to adopt a non-discriminatory policy regarding the six existing buildings where they had previously excluded families with children. Under the new policy, Defendants will be allowed to restrict occupancy in these buildings to licensed workers only, provided they do so on a nondiscriminatory basis. Although denying any wrongdoing or liability, Defendants have also agreed to pay a \$10,000 civil penalty to the United States. Defendants will also pay \$160,000 in damages and other relief to resolve HOPE's claim.

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